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and too cumbersome, but the partituns or miniature scores, which though now expensive and hard to buy on account of war conditions, will not long remain so); piano works, among which please put the standard symphonies arranged for four hands; some good anthologies of songs and choruses; some good collections for violin and cello, and the simpler trios and quartets, always remembering the trend of the times is towards the community and not to the individual. Not forgetting Bach and Handel and some of the delightful modern collections for organ, and, above all, everything available of American composition, especially anything of local talent, to whose merit I should be very lenient for the encouragement of the others. For if I am interested by the great demand for good music, I am daily depressed by the complaints of the American artists that their countrymen will not give them a hearing.

There are many chatty and interesting musical periodicals from which each individual librarian will make a choice, but among them don't fail to subscribe to the *Musical Quarterly*, published by G. Schirmer of New York, the most intellectual and impersonal American magazine, devoted solely to music.

The library should be in close touch with all the local musical organizations and their activities, that they may provide for their several necessities. Near the music shelves it would be advisable to bulletin all musical events of local or national significance.

If I have seemed to neglect or deprecate the value of the teachers of composition, that is very far from my intention. I am filled, as we all should be, with admiration for and gratitude towards those foreign-born artists who bring and give to us much from their older and rarer cultivation. They will always be found here in New York where the artists of the world congregate, but I believe it will not be here, where art can be had for the purchase, that the American creative genius will be born, but in the great West, where teachers are few and inspiration comes direct from Nature herself, and it is there that it should be the privilege of the American public library to bring *art-inspiration* to the American genius, that he may truly seek and *find himself* under the auspices of a peculiarly American institution. In this way can the library help in the formation of that school of American national music, to see which is the heart-felt desire of this Writer from a Branch Library.

#### DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF A CIRCULATING MUSIC COLLECTION

By MISS AMY MEYER, *Public Library, Detroit, Michigan*

The idea of lending music scores as a library project has not always been in good repute. The tradition that the library function should confine itself to an accumulation and judicious circulation of the "printed word" did not include in its neat and positive boundaries any intention of admitting printed music. But the number of people who know the musical alphabet, which unlocks and opens to them the realm of sound, is growing rapidly. If the United States represents a nation young in all the arts, this same youthfulness fosters a vigorous and increasing

effort to overcome this deficiency. The teaching of the rudiments of music is now an integral part of the public school curriculum. Within the last few years, some of the large public school systems, among them Detroit, have employed special teachers of piano, theory, history and musical appreciation and are giving definite credit for the work. Likewise the enormous popularity of so-called mechanical music is flooding even the most isolated regions, whether farmhouse or miner's shanty, with an influence which may be half bad but is also half good. It is problematical

what the effect will be on the next generation, but there will be a result which we must begin to consider.

This musical development will affect public libraries. For some time a feature of large city libraries, though perhaps dusty and unused, it is now becoming feasible for even the small town to consider the addition of a musical section. No town is so small that it lacks its music teachers, its church choirs, the village soloist, the retired concert pianist, the girl who torments a piano in the movie theater, its music club, and all the aspiring boys and girls who through compulsion or inclination drone endlessly through Bach and simper through the Maiden's Prayer.

Multiply that by a thousand or two, add to it a symphony orchestra and you have the problem as it faces the average large city, and as we find it in the city of Detroit, fascinating because of its possibilities and its impossibilities.

I regret that so much of this discussion represents plans and suggestions in place of actual accomplishment, but it is all based upon results achieved thus far, and therefore I hope it records sound conclusions.

During the last two years Detroit has taken a great musical stride, due to the development of our symphony orchestra under Mr. Gabrilowitsch. The growth of the orchestra brought with it many trained musicians, and increased the necessity for enlarging the music section for a special music and drama room in the new main library which we hope to enter in the fall.

I hope to save time and avoid confusion by describing first the arrangement of this music room. It is well lighted by three windows and has only wall shelving. One section of oversize shelves with frequent metal uprights is to be used for bound score. Smaller shelves accommodate the books about music. The reference collection and bound magazines occupy another section. Sheet music is to be filed horizontally in pamphlet boxes similar to those used in music stores. Each box will have its own shelf unit and there are provisions

for about 100 boxes. The shelving for victrola records is to be identical with that used in music stores, narrow upright compartments in which the records are filed numerically.

When we began sixteen months ago to amplify and reorganize our music section we found that an entire reclassification would be necessary. We investigated the systems now in use in various libraries, and evolved a system to fit our own particular needs, based on the remnants of the Dewey classification which was then in use. An effort was made to save as much of the former scheme as could be adapted to the needs of the future, and all new ideas and requirements were grafted on this basis. This resulted in a system which, though not as perfect as an entire new system, has thus far worked out very well.

The main features of this classification are the use of a 780 number for literature about music, M780 for bound score and MS780 for sheet music.

As the reclassification proceeded, we rebound where necessary, using maroon fabricoid for bound score, and golden brown fabricoid for literature about music. Sheet music is sewed into brown paper covers regularly equipped with a pocket and date slip.

The music room will contain a special catalog, which will be duplicated in the main catalog. This will be supplemented by a title index for songs and possibly a composer index for piano compositions. The clipping collection, kept in a vertical filing case, will contain pictures, programs, words of songs, newspaper and magazine clippings on any musical subject, trade catalog, etc.

Conditions which govern the circulation of books also obtain for the circulation of music scores. A four weeks' loan is customary, extension of time upon this period calling for individual consideration. The number of scores circulated at one time depends entirely upon the demand prevailing at the moment, the state of our resources and the length of time which the

borrower needs the material. During the opera season, for instance, there might be a week or two weeks time limit with maximum of two scores to a borrower. While it is of unquestioned value to the advanced musician to be able to go to a quiet room in a public library to read a certain score, it is of greater value to the ordinarily impecunious student, to be allowed to take it with him for audible reading on the instrument for which it was written. Only purely reference material is marked reference and under sufficient guarantee even that is lent for a limited time if necessity arises.

To further the establishment of a working county system, the music department will try to get in touch with all music clubs in the small towns in the county. It is possible for any such club to take advantage of our resources by having the secretary take out an annual card for which there is a charge of one dollar, and deposit another dollar for the postage which will accrue. The department will work out any club program and send out the material under regular conditions of circulation.

At the beginning of the concert season, we make a prospectus of all concerts for the year, using all the advance information at our command. This is duplicated for every branch in the system, and posted on the general bulletin board. During each week, material relating to the concerts of that week is gathered on a table under the board.

In a middle western city like Detroit, there is no opportunity for musicians to examine new publications as they are put out each month by American firms. If we can make satisfactory arrangements with the publishers, we plan to try exhibiting such music in our new music room. We will, of course, accept for this purpose only compositions of merit and no popular music at all. Whatever we can use will then be added to our collection, and the remainder returned or discarded.

In discussing the subject of mechanical records, I admit at once that nothing can

be as bad, as excruciating, as a pianola or victrola under the merciless ministrations of the average American family. Perhaps if you have had experience with the man who is learning to play the slide trombone, you may question that statement. Likewise, nothing has as much concentrated potentiality for good as an aid in developing musical taste and creating musical experience. In Detroit, we considered the addition of both phonograph and pianola records. We rejected the idea of pianola records for the following reason: The only artistic records made are those which reproduce the exact rendition of the artist, all the minute shadings of tone and tempo which combine to make a perfect interpretation. Thus when the musically ignorant man has put the record in place and started the machine, he is powerless to mar it by his own whims of crescendo and retard or a liberal application of the sostenuto pedal. But the instruments which use such records, such as the Duo-Art and the Ampico, are so expensive as to put them quite out of the reach of the ordinary householder. This deprives them of general value for library use. The same objection does not hold for phonograph records, so we decided to include disc records in our collection, buying along a well-defined plan—scores of the operas, as complete as possible, good orchestral music, folk and national songs and dances, and records to illustrate music history and music form. The staff assembly room will be equipped with an instrument and will be open to use by classes from the conservatories or music clubs. Once a month, the librarian for the blind will conduct a concert for the blind illustrative of some musical phase or subject. An effort will be made to help the ordinary listener prepare for concerts or for the opera by playing for him whatever records may be procured in this connection. Any record will be played for the genuinely interested person upon application. Records will also be lent in groups to schools, clubs, and other organizations with a charge for breakage and scratching. In story hours

for the children, they may be used to illustrate stories from the opera and folk tales of all nations.

The project of lending records to private individuals would require such a heavy financial outlay in a large city as to make it impractical at present, although I think the life of a record might be longer than the life of an ordinary book of fiction, and assuming that we had only fine records, twice as educational.

Detroit began the enlargement of its music collection at the most inopportune time in the history of the last fifty years. American publishing houses publish only the most meagre assortment of good music. Since the beginning of the war, the price on all foreign editions, most of which are German, has been exorbitant, and it has been almost impossible to secure editions at any price. If it were possible to deal with Germany directly and take advantage of the low rate of exchange on the mark, an enormous saving could be effected. To my knowledge, this can only be done by depositing a certain amount on account with a German house, sending an order, and accepting any bill upon the account which the concern may choose to levy. By using this method with Eote and Bock, one Detroit musician acquired the scores he desired at exceptional prices. But in the case of a public library system like that of Detroit, where no bill can be paid until the books are delivered, there seems to be no possible way of importing directly. It is also rumored that German music firms are now issuing catalogs with American prices attached in order to escape the low rate of exchange.

Nothing quickens a man's interest in any project like putting something of himself into it, no matter how few or how extensive his suggestions may be. So in compiling our lists of additions, we endeavored to consult as many musicians as possible, teachers, organists, orchestra players and any chance musician who uses the library regularly. This proved of inestimable value in establishing acquaintanceship with the city's musical interests,

and did much to foster that spirit of personal freedom and good-will without which no public institution can successfully accomplish its purpose.

And the variant types of people whom the public library can serve in a musical way are legion. They range from the itinerant fiddler who wants to repair his violin to the symphony orchestra player who asks for a quintet for woodwinds. Perhaps a member of the Ladies' Aid has written a hymn and comes in for a book on how to write music, or the soloist from a moving picture theater sends in a hurry call for an operatic aria. From all walks of life, people pour in with appeals for the words of an old song they sang perhaps in 1862. The schools send in requests for four-hand piano music to use in sight-reading classes. A victrola enthusiast cannot distinguish the words of the records he has purchased. The old gentleman who cannot play a note sits in the corner and reads opera scores by the hour. The boy studying instrumentation searches indefatigably every day for the Brahms No. 2, to be played at the next symphony concert, and music teachers and serious students of all kinds read the shelves regularly for new scores or additional material.

Our plans for publicity work in connection with the opening of the music room in the new main library are naturally tentative, but I will outline them in the eventuality that they may contain something of suggestion. We hope to make this occasion coincide with the opening of the concert season, and to precede it with a feature page in the Sunday newspapers. A special number of our bi-monthly publication "Library Service" will contain information concerning the different kinds of service we are prepared to give with an invitation to examine our resources upon this special day. Library Service will be mailed on our regular mailing list, sent to all music teachers and members of musical societies and organizations, distributed through the music stores and music schools. We may supplement the general announcement by a

more personal invitation in conventional form to be mailed to the more prominent musicians and heads of organizations.

As for this opening day itself, it is to be as far from a "pink tea" as possible—merely an effort to have all our resources

on display and to talk personally to as many people as possible, explaining the arrangement of the room, ascertaining each person's needs and welcoming his suggestions—an establishment of friendly relations, and an offering of service.

### BEGINNINGS OF AGRICULTURAL LITERATURE IN AMERICA

By DR. RODNEY HOWARD TRUE, *Bureau of Plant Industry, Washington, D. C.*

Owing to the limits necessarily set to the discussion of so broad a subject as that dealt with in this paper I shall not attempt any considerable degree of thoroughness, but shall rather content myself with touching somewhat lightly on the more important features of our agricultural literary beginnings. Frequently, it is not easy to define the limits of our proper material, since travelers and letter writers of olden times told about whatever caught their attention, and matters related to our subject are often mentioned only incidentally and briefly. Therefore, it would be expected that agricultural literature in its beginning would be merged with writing on many other subjects. Only as it increased in volume and in definiteness of aim did it become differentiated as a subject of special consideration.

The stories of the European explorers of necessity constitute the first chapter of American agricultural annals. It will be noted that although these explorers came from the most advanced civilizations of their time, and brought to the observation of the New World the acutest insight and keenest curiosity, nevertheless apart from statements of the simplest facts of natural production their records are relatively empty. The lack of an honorable and established status of agriculture itself in the Old World is perhaps largely responsible for this silence. Commerce and precious metals rather than homely products of the soil were engrossing the world's attention.

Probably the earliest item of American agricultural history of which more than shadowy tradition remains is found in the

writings of Adam of Bremen, who before 1076 quotes the words of King Svend of Denmark, who spoke to him "of an island in the ocean which is called Vinland, for the reason that vines grow wild there which yield the best of wine. Moreover, that grain unsown grows there abundantly is not a fabulous fancy."<sup>1</sup> Thus wild grapes and wild rice seen at some northern point on the Atlantic Coast first to come into our view. To trace their place in subsequent writings would be to tell a long but most interesting story for which we have here neither time nor space.

"Wineland, the Good," however, has been relegated by some writers to the twilight regions of history, but all agree that safe beginnings are found in the voyages of Columbus who five hundred years later saw the New World farther to the Southward. Peter Martyr<sup>2</sup> in his *Decades*, written in 1511 is believed to have first described the products found there, by the great navigator, Collins,<sup>3</sup> who has especially investigated the history of maize, finds here the first reference to this great American contribution to the world's food supply, and to the native name "maizium" under which we still know it. Columbus found also a bean of some kind and a food-yielding root, perhaps cassava.

It would be interesting to review the

<sup>1</sup>See Channing, Edw. *History of United States*, 1:2, 1905; also Reeves, Arthur M. *Finding of Wineland, the Good*. London, 1890.

<sup>2</sup>Martyr, Peter. *The Decades of the Newe Worlde or West India*. Written in the Latine tounge by Peter Martyr of Angleria and translated into Englusshe by Buscharde Eden, London, 1555.

<sup>3</sup>Collins, G. N. *Notes on the Agricultural History of Maize*. Read before the Agricultural History Society, 1919. Unpublished.